

Conversations

for clarinet, viola and cello

Robert Davidson

Program Note

Conversations was composed for Perihelion shortly after returning from seven months of travel, focusing on musical study in South India and spending time in Europe and the USA. Perhaps as a result of the stimulus of this period, I found myself approaching the composition with a sense of openness, changing from my usual concern for the unity which results from reduced material. While the use of material is reduced, it stems from a wide range of sources, playfully combined. Hymns from my Methodist upbringing, Bach counterpoint, Sibelius harmony, Beatle tunes, rhythms of Kerala and countless other musics went into forming, in varying degrees, my musical intuition as it was in 1993. I attempted to allow this intuition full rein, believing that music is most successful when it accurately reflects its composer and his or her background.

Rational structures serve to organise the intuitive material of the three movements. The first and third movements are simple ground-bass canons. I am attracted to this form by its neat combination of repetition and variation, simultaneously defying and satisfying expectations, and by the way the instruments copy each other and get beyond their individual concerns. In the second movement a process of ever-diminishing time intervals articulates a handful of stretched-out chords, which accompany free pattern-melodies, swapped between the instruments in conversational fashion. Surrounding the first and second movements, and in the postlude, is music of quiet simplicity. Here there is less concern for rational structure than for communication of emotion, though not without a certain distance.

Conversations

for clarinet, viola and cello

for Perihelion

Robert Davidson
composed November 1993

I Allegro $\text{d} = 132$

bright, forward

Clarinet in B \flat

Viola

Cello

p

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

pp

A Piu mosso $\text{d} = 144$

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

mf

p

22

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

esp.

mf

mp

$piu f$

4

B♭ Cl.

32

Vla.

Vc.

B♭ Cl.

32

Vla.

Vc.

B♭ Cl.

41

Vla.

Vc.

B♭ Cl.

49

Vla.

Vc.

B♭ Cl.

56

Vla.

Vc.

B♭ Cl.

64

Vla.

Vc.

B
esp.

C

D

B♭ Cl. 71 calmly legato, sost.

Vla. 71 *p* subito
legato, sost.

Vc. 71 *f* *p* subito
legato, sost.

E a little bolder

B♭ Cl. 82 *mf*

Vla. 82 *fp*

Vc. 82 *fp*

B♭ Cl. 92 *mf*

Vla. 92 *mf*

Vc. 92 *mf*

F

B♭ Cl. 101 accomp.
p *fp*
bold but calm

Vla. 101 *mf*

Vc. 101 *fp* *mf* *mp*

B♭ Cl. 109 *mf*

Vla. 109 *mf*

Vc. 109 *mf*

G

116

B♭ Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

116

f

off the string

f

123

B♭ Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

123

piu f

poco rit.

H

Tempo I

$\text{♩} = 132$

131

B♭ Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

131

mp

p

p

139

B♭ Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

139

pp

147

B♭ Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

147

mf

pp

mf

II Andante rubato $\text{♩} = 72$

7

B♭ Cl. Vla. Vc.

poco stringendo

154 Solo pp p

154 p mp p mp esp. mp p

p pp mp > p

a tempo precise durations * ——————

poco rit.

163 B♭ Cl. mf p

163 Vla. mf p

Vc. mf p

short pause a tempo poco rit. | a tempo

172 B♭ Cl. f dim. p pp

172 Vla. (end of solo) p pp

Vc. f dim. Solo p mp >

180 B♭ Cl. mf p

180 Vla. esp. p mf p

Vc. p mf p

poco meno mosso J

186 B♭ Cl. ff mf mp > p < mp > p > pp , f p

186 Vla. ff mf mp > p < mp > p > pp , f > p

Vc. ff > mf dim. > pp f > p

8

Piu mosso $\text{♩} = 96$

buoyant

194 B♭ Cl. f p f p

194 Vla. \mathfrak{f} p \mathfrak{f} p

Vc. \mathfrak{f} p f p

K Tempo I $\text{♩} = 72$

201 B♭ Cl. pp f p

201 Vla. pp f p p sempre

Vc. pp f p mp

legato esp.

207 B♭ Cl. mp f p

207 Vla. f

Vc. f p p

211 B♭ Cl. mf f

211 Vla. mp

Vc. fp mp

L

215 B♭ Cl. f p

215 Vla. f p mf

Vc. f p p sempre

220 elegantly

B♭ Cl. *mf*

Vla. *pp*

Vc. *f* *p*

220

B♭ Cl.

Vla. *pp*

Vc. *f* *p*

224

B♭ Cl. *mp*

Vla. *f* *p* *mf*

Vc. *f* *p*

229 M mysteriously

B♭ Cl. *mf* *ff* *p*

Vla. *mf* *ff* *p* *pp*

Vc. *ff* *p* *pp*

233

B♭ Cl. *fp*

Vla. *c*

Vc. *c*

233

B♭ Cl. *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

239

B♭ Cl. *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

10 N

B♭ Cl. 244 *f p* legato *mp*

Vla. 244 *f p* *mf*

Vc. 244 *accomp.* *f p pp*

B♭ Cl. 250 *mf* *mf*

Vla. 250 *mf* *mf*

Vc. 250 *mf*

B♭ Cl. 255 *pp* *f p mp*

Vla. 255 *pp* *f p pp*

Vc. 255 *p*

B♭ Cl. 261 *>* *>*

Vla. 261

Vc. 261 *p* *mp* *<>*

B♭ Cl. 267 *>*

Vla. 267

Vc. 267 *3*

273 P **Piu mosso** $\text{♩} = 96^{11}$
 Bb Cl. $\text{F} \text{ p } \text{ f }$
 esp.
 Vla. $\text{f} \text{ p } \text{ p }$
 Vc. $\text{f} \text{ p } \text{ f }$
 273
 Vc. $\text{f} \text{ p } \text{ f }$
 280 Q **Tempo I** $\text{♩} = 72$
 Bb Cl. $\text{p } \text{ pp } \text{ <> }$
 Solo esp.
 Vla. mfp
 Vc. $\text{pp } \text{ <> }$
 287
 Bb Cl. mf
 Vla. mf
 Vc. mf
 296 **rall.** **molto rit.** **a tempo** **poco rit.**
 Bb Cl. dim. poco a poco
 Vla. dim. poco a poco
 Vc. dim. poco a poco
 303 **a tempo** R **Piu mosso** $\text{♩} = 96$ **rit.**
 Bb Cl. pp
 Vla. pp
 Vc. pp

12

III Energetic $\text{♩} = 152$

310

B♭ Cl.

Vla. marcato
f
marcato

Vc.

317

B♭ Cl. marcato
f

Vla.

Vc.

323

B♭ Cl.

Vla. *sffz f*

Vc.

329

B♭ Cl.

Vla. *sffz f*

Vc.

334

B♭ Cl. ben marcato

Vla. ben marcato

Vc.

T

B♭ Cl. 338

14

B♭ Cl. V
369 tenuto very calm, but in strict tempo
Vla. legato, sost.
Vc.

369 tenuto p 0 pp
Vla. pp
Vc. legato, sost.

377
B♭ Cl. p
Vla. p legato, sost.
Vc.

386
B♭ Cl. mf
Vla. accomp. pizz.
Vc. p

393
B♭ Cl. <> tr accomp.
Vla. arco pp buoyant, joyful
Vc. mf

399
B♭ Cl.
Vla.
Vc.

405 X

B♭ Cl. savagely

Vla. *p* *fff*

Vc. *ff*

ritmico, marcato, energico

411 Y

B♭ Cl.

Vla. ritmico, marcato, energico

Vc. *ff*

417

B♭ Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

423 Z

B♭ Cl. sotto voce

Vla. off the string *pp*

Vc. *p* Solo esp., dolce, legato *mp*

431

B♭ Cl.

Vla. *pp*

Vc. *mf*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *pp*

Vla. *pp*

Vc. *p*

16

AA

confidently joyful

438

B♭ Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

438

savagely
fff subito

f

445

B♭ Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

451

B♭ Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

457

B♭ Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

BB

ben marcato

462

B♭ Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

467 CC

B♭ Cl. *p* pizz.

Vla. *p* pizz.

Vc.

467 DD

B♭ Cl. *pp* <*mp* <*mf* <*f* *pp*

Vla. *pp* <*mp* <*mf* <*f* *pp*

Vc. *pp* <*mp* <*mf* <*f* *pp*

474 arco

IV Andante $\text{♩} = 104$

484 B♭ Cl. *semplec* con sord. 0

Vla. *p* *semplec* con sord.

Vc. *p*

493 EE

B♭ Cl. *ppp*,

Vla. *mp* *mf* *p* *ppp*

Vc. *mp* *mf* *p* *ppp*

501 FF *semplec*

B♭ Cl. *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

poco allarg. a tempo

510

B♭ Cl. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

518

B♭ Cl. *p*

Vla. *intense* *sul. II*

Vc. *intense*

523

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

526

Vla.

Vc.

529

B♭ Cl.

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

532 HH

poco allarg. a tempo poco allarg. JJ **Piu mosso** $\text{d} = 76$ 19

B♭ Cl. Vla. Vc.

esp. esp. mf
 $f >$ mp $f >$
 $f >$ mp $f >$
 mf mf mf
 $ff pp$ subito $ff pp$ subito $ff pp$ subito

543

B♭ Cl. Vla. Vc.

dark, sombre p dark, sombre pp
 p mp p pp
 pp pp pp

554 KK

brightening (very short break)

B♭ Cl. Vla. Vc.

mp mf $f pp$ subito
brightening mf $f pp$ subito
brightening mf $f pp$ subito

563 LL

blend tone with string harmonics rall.
B♭ Cl. Vla. Vc.

pp sempre pp sempre pp sempre